# Origin of the Caster Cags and Robbits-Among the Wost Ancient of the Season's Wany Legends

ASTER MONRING—and great nests licious cream chocolate and real eggs mottled for the little ones!

How the children hunt, breathless, eagereyed, expectant, pulling the furniture out of place, looking under the bed, under chairs and tables; pulling down boxes in the yard, peeping under porches, digging into obscure cor-

They know it is somewhere—that nest of red or green straw filled with eggs of de- hare? No doubt you have often wondered.

overladen with chocolate bunnies, with wonderful hues. Then there are cries of colored eggs and other seasonable gifts delight as they find it-the Easter nest of which they have been dreaming for weeks.

To the child Easter is a day when candied rabbits and eggs loom large. To the elders it is essentially a religious feast.

Then how did the custom originate of preparing nests on this day for the little ones? In what corner of the earth and in what remote time did a child first crack a colored egg? And what significance has the rabbit or

O TRACE the custom of breaking eggs to its birth and learn the reason of the association of the hare with the day, one must go away back to the days when Osiris was worshiped along the Nile

and the Phoenicians knelt to the goddess of the moon.

The ancients looked upon the egg as representing the germinal principle of life, and in the spring of the year celebrated the resurrection of natural life by coloring eggs. From them, Christianity inherited the custom of giving eggs to children on their great festival of the resurrection of the Saviour.

Nothing is more fascinating than tracing a myth to its source-if any source can be found. Through dusty, worm-eaten volumes one is taken through the centuries on a long backward journey; he learns the customs and religions of ancient peoples who have long perished and whose great cities have been laid in ruins or buried in

From north to south, from east to west, across waste plains and oceans, the investigator visits alien nations, primal tribes, and in varying forms finds the myth flitting about like the embodiment of some clusive ideal.

Thus with the Easter rabbit and the Easter egg.

This morning, as you watch the little tots dancing tip-toe with cestasy over their nest, you probably have no deeper thought than in enjoying their pleasure.

Yet there is a significance in both the rabbit and the

erg-a world of mythology and romance and folklore which has survived the centuries. Why is the rabbit associated with Easter? Ten to

one you do not know, Of the wonderful life of Buddha—"the Enlightened One"—many tales of noble and kindly deeds are told; his life has been invested with fables signifying the goodness of the man. beautiful stories told geodness of the man. Yet perhaps one of the most beautiful stories told little Hindu children by their parents is that Buddha, while on a journey, came across

a starving traveler.

Of food he had none, so of sheer kindness he changed himself into a hare and threw himself into a fire, where he was roasted. For this he was translated in the form of the hare to the moon, where he abides. As they look at the moon, the starry-eyed little Indians believe they can see the form of the couchant have on the bright face

of the lunar disc Many other Hindu myths and myths of other nations connect the hare with the moon, and as the moon was

Hot Cross Buns Popular

long associated with Easter, it was only natural, haps, that as Christianity spread over the earth

haps, that as Christianity spread over the earth the animals should have become connected with the festival.

To discover why the moon played an important part in forming the present-day celebrations of the festival one must take a journey into the archaeological lore of

Because the Western churches objected to the simul-

taneous celebration of Easter by the Christians with the celebration of the Passover by the Jews, the Council of

Nice decreed in 325 A. D. that in future the festival

should be observed the first Sunday after the first full moon upon or after the vernal equinox.

This full moon was the imaginary moon of the cal-

endar and not the moon of the astronomer. In this way

the moon became associated with the festival. Both the Egyptians and the Hebrews calculated time by the planet, The story of the Resurrection itself had a counterpart

MOON TYPIFIED NEW LIFE

the sign of new life. The waning moon typified dark-ness and death, Typhon, or the Evil Principle, who ruled for fourteen days and tore Osiris into fourteen pieces.

in celebration of his victory a black pig representing Typhon was sacrificed to the radiant god. In certain parts of England a leg of pig is still caten on Easter

Monday-no doubt a survival of the old sacrifice In Egyptian hieroglyphics the hind leg of a hare is representative of Typhon, the left leg particularly signi-fying the vanquishment of the Evil One.

When full, the moon typined the Lord of Light, Osiris,

But Osiris came back to life with the new moon, and

The superstition that the left hind foot of a graveyard rabbit warded off evil among the negroes of the Eouth found its origin no doubt in the Egyptian myth.

The Egyptian word "un" meant both "hare" and

ing of the new year in nature-spring-and, of course, was readily incorporated into the celebration of the

in the old mythology of Egypt.

resurrection of Christ.

ported into America from Germany. There it has been for a long time the custom to give the little ones of a family colored hen oggs at the Easter festival.

"But from where do these eggs come? They are not like those of the barnyard chickens." This was not an

unnatural question of the children.

Parents, years and years ago, were accustomed to ex

plain that the eggs had been laid by rabbits in the fields. So every Easter morning, the children clamored to be led into the fields to search for the wonderful rabbit nests.

It was really the hare and not the rabbit which tradition associated with the spring festival, but then not

In the ceremonies attending many Christian fostivals are remnants of the customs of the ancients, who, when



they were converted, unconsciously translated their be-

liefs and regulated their feasts to the new faith. The name of Easter has been traced to the spring festival of the Saxons in honor of Eostre, the per cation of spring. The Saxon goddess was identical with the Phoenician goddess of the moon, Asiarte.

In honor of Eostre the early Saxons were accustomed to eating buns on her festival. When they were converted to Christianity they observed Easter in memory of the Resurrection instead of a celebration in honor of their old goddess, but the habit of eating hot buns re mained. To take away the taint of Paganism, the Christian priests marked the sign of the cross on the Since then the custom has traveled down the centuries—hence the present-day hot cross buns, which are so popular across the water. In England on Easter one always hears the cry:

One a penny buns,
Two a penny buns,
One a penny, two a penny,
Hot cross buns,

Among the Mexicans it is a custom at Easter time to make tortillas, or oblong cakes, especially for the season. That this practice had its origin in the old Saxon custom seems without doubt. Many curious Easter customs and traditions still pre-

vail in different parts of the world.

In the parish of Biddenden, Kent, England, is an old endowment providing for the distribution of 600 cakes

among the poor upon the afternoon of Easter Sunday The endowment is of an unknown date.

These cakes bear a curious representation of two fe-

male figures joined at the shoulders and the hips. A legend is extant that two women who were thus joined made the endowment ages ago.

Among the Egyptians, Persians, Greeks and Romans

for centuries before Christ the egg was the symbol of eternity and life.

At the spring feasts the boys of Rome and Athens knocked colored eggs together just as boys do in school today. The Persians, at a festival corresponding to our Easter, have been accustomed for ages to present to each other nests of delicately tinted eggs.

According to Chinese mythology, "everything springs from the egg—it is the world's cradle." Pon-Koo-Wong, according to a myth, came from an egg, which broke in two, of the upper part of which he made the heavens

and the lower part the earth.

The Hawaiians believe that their island was produced by the bursting of an egg which was dropped on the ocean by a great bird.

back of the house and placed on a great table strewn with flowers. About it are placed a dozen dishes of It is clear, when one considers the ancient associa-tion of the rabbit with the moon, upon which the date of Easter festival depended, and the use of the egg in meat, . Wealthy families display all their silver in the the spring celebrations of the Pagans, why both should have become connected with Easter.

## EGGS SOUGHT FOR LONG AGO

On "Pash Sunday" it was an early custom in Scotland for young persons to rise early in the morning and go out on the moor to search for wild fowls' eggs. If a

nest was found, this was considered a lucky omen.

In England eggs were boiled hard, colored and given by one friend to another as remembrances. Formerly they were consecrated.

For many centuries eggs were used for ball playing on the Monday following Easter. Perhaps this was how the practice of boiling them hard originated. Afterward it became customary for various towns to engage in ball games with each other after Easter Sunday with gayly colored egg-shaped balls. The games were accompanied by great pomp.

churches on Easter Sunday. While an antiphone was sung the dean and his representatives danced, the dean in the centre and the others about him ha circle. While they sang they bandled a ball to one another.

It is an old belief that it was unlucky for a person to

wear nothing new on Easter, and in all countries it became the custom for every one to wear some new piece of attire. In the old verse the custom is humorously described:

Laste Easter I put on my blue frock coat, The virst tline, vier new; W! yaller buttons and o' brass, That glittered in the zun like glass; Bekalzo' twer Easter Zundny.

# Some Curious Facts and Fancies

REMANY carries on a large trade in the export of canaries. Every year she sends no fewer than 130,000 of these birds to America, 3000 to England, and about 2000 to Russia. The great nursery for the breeding of canaries is the Harz Mountains. Many of the peasants are engaged in the work of rearing the birds, and receive wages of from \$50 to \$125 a year for their trouble—an important addition to their carnings.

Birmingham, England, boasts of the largest pin factory in the world, where 37,000,000 pins are manufactured every working day.

By way of experiment, an American made a wager in Vienna with an athlete that the latter could not endure the falling of a pint of water on his hand, drop by drop, in one spot, from a height of only three feet. The athlete had an enormous hand, lined with skin almost as thick and tough as cowhide. But when about 300 drops had fallen there was a change of opinion, and at the 420th drop he gave up, declaring that he could no longer endure the torture.

, Residents of England have \$550,000,000 invested in mortgages in foreign countries.

One of the greatest drug stores in the world exists in Moscow, and is 203 years old. Since 1833 it has been in the family of the present proprietors. It is a building of im-posing dimensions, with many departments, including one of professional education for the staff, which numbers 700 persons. They make up about 2000 prescriptions a day.

The nut trees of the world could, it is calculated, pro-

vide food all the year round for the population of the globe. Brazil nuts grow in such profusion that thousands of tons of them are wasted every year.

#### STRANGE MILITARY BODY

A strange military body is a band of cavalry at Saint de Moorvay, a province on the East Coast of Africa, which is under the rule of the French Governor-General at Madagascar. These solders go about their military operations on oxen. The animals are leap creatures, and it is said they move with surprising rapidity

Sixty years ago there were 150,000 children at school India. Now there are over 4,000,000. A Hebrew Bible in the Vatican weight \$20 pounds, and

is the largest Bible in the world. It is all in manuscript.

In Russia an unmarried woman remains under the absolute sway of her parents until her death, regardless

As many as 8000 gallons of fresh water are used in a large battleship daily, says an English authority. About two-thirds of this is taken up by the boilers, and the remainder is used for drinking, washing cooking, etc. When the store which she has taken out with her from port has been used up, a vessel has to depend upon her condensers for further supplies. Every modern warshing is fitted with evaporating machinery to distil the salt

Madrid has the reputation of being the most unhealthy

of European capitals. Russia's Cross of St. Andrew has a remarkable peculi-arity attaching to it. All who are decorated with it have the right once to demand a pardon for a Russian subject condemned to death.

London's net municipal debt amounts to over \$220,-

The Kaiser's yearly bill for traveling by rail from one part of his Empire to another amounts to \$500,000. His Majesty has special trains, and pays the ordinary rate on all rallways. He travels almost continuously. Recently the Emperor has adopted the motor-car, but for all ceremonial visits he still considers it necessary to travel by

The golden-crested wren, the smallest British bird, is so tiny that it would take seventy-two of these feathered atoms to weigh a pound. The bird is three and one-half inches long.

German silver contains no silver, but is an alloy of copper, nickel and zinc. It is harder than silver. The best proportions of the alloy are fifty copper, twenty nickel, thirty zinc.

Marbles are chiefly made in Germany. Rough frag-ments of marble or agate are ground between two milistones, and finished between hard-stone cylinders in a wooden cask.

Gypsies are usually supposed to be of Egyptian origin but, as a matter of fact, they probably came originally from India, and reached Europe about the beginning of

the fifteenth century.

The highest waterfull in the world is in the Yesemite Valley, Mariposa county, Cal. The Yosemite river drops

over precipices 2000 feet high in three separate plunges, of which the first is a sheer drop of 1500 feet. Spain possesses the richest silver mines in Europe. For many years she has produced annually about 120,000 pounds of silver. But the oldest silver mines belong to Germany, and are the Erze Gebirge, between Saxony and

The polka was originally a Servian war-dance. A horse has forty teeth, twenty-four being grinders,

#### four tusks and twelve front teeth. ENGLISH SPEAKERS LEAD

Great Britain and her colonies and the United States represent together the total of 111,000,000 English-speaking persons, figures which leave all competitors hopelessly in the rear. Germany and Russia occupy second place, with 75,000,000 apiece, and France, Spain, Italy and Portufollow, with 51,000,000, 43,000,000, 33,000,000 and 13, 000,000 respectively, according to the Atlas of the World's

The Duke of Buccleuch holds the odd record of possessing more residences than any other British nobleman. He has eleven in all.

The earliest known directory is that of London, pub-

Ceylon is the hottest and Northwest Canada the coldest possession that the British flag fleats over.

The Russian Empire holds the record of having under its sway sixty-five separate and distinct racial groups.

About 20,000 people live in the crater of an extinct volcano in Japan. They dwell in this pit-like town, surrounded by a vertical wall eighty feet high, rarely making a journey into the outer world, and practically forming a little community by themselves.

a little community by themselves.

The announcement comes from Paris that the French Academy hopes to complete the letter "C" of the eighth edition of its dictionary by the end of next year. The edition was begun in 1877, so that, at the present rate of progress, the entire work will not be completed for 250

There are 430 manufactories of artificial flowers, leaves plants and fruits in the district of Dresden. The largest manufactories employ from 250 to 1000 persons, and the total number of persons engaged in the trade is estimated at 10,000, the largest proportion being women and girls.

## Clever Ruse of an Evangelist

T IS stated that at a recent religious revival in Kansas the evangelist in charge noticed the remarkably large number of pennies in the contribution basket at

One night the preacher held up a silver dollar and a copper penny and gave a conversation held by the two

"You poor little red cent, you; you don't amount to

"You poor little fed cent, you; you don't amount to anything. I'd hate to be you," said the big dollar.
"I know I'm not very big," replied the cent, "but the children like me, and I can buy a good many things,"
"Hull you can't buy anything at all," said the dollar. "Just look at me; big and bright and shiny. I can buy a whole lot more than you can."
"May be so," said the little red cent, meekly, "but I so to church a hear offener than you do, anyway."

# Do Your Brain Work at 1 A. M. Say Physicians

OW would you like to get up at 1 o'clock in the morning and go to work?

Professor Hallopean, an eminent brain specialist of Europe, at the recent food get up, eat a hearty dinner, take another nap, get

HERE is no doubt, to my mind," said Dr. Albert Bernheim, a well-known Philadelphia physician, "that better work can be done at 1 o'clock in the morning than at 1 in the after-

"Of course, many persons could not do it. Others

would find the hours agree wonderfully well with them.

"The reason is simple. At this hour everything is quiet. The vibrations which assail one during the day,

disconcerting the mind, unconsciously distracting us,

congress in Paris, declared that the best intel-

Go to bed after the noon lunch was his advice; get up, eat a hearty dinner, take another nap, get up an hour after midnight, and take up your work.

get up and work. Supposing we did that; supposing all men get up at 1 c'clock instead of 6 or 8 and started to work; suppose the trolley cars started going, the newsboys screaming. Why, night would be turned into day and conditions would be as bad as before.

"Tersons doing intellectual work, I think, should be able to do the best early in the morning or late at night. In translating from the German I have worked all night, siept a few hours and folt refreshed the following day. There is not the same wear and tear on the nerves when you work at night as there is during daytime. I think you could work for many

is during daytime. I think you could work for many nights and feel little fatigue, especially if the work is But there is a difference in brains, Some persons

"But there is a difference in brains. Some persons would be powerless to work so early. I know literary people who can write only after a light breakfast in the morning. Balzac, so it is said, could write only after he had gorged himself with a big dinner.
"In the country I do not think it matters if it is night or day. It is always quiet. In the city it would probably be beneficial to sleep after lunch, take a doze after dinner, smoke a cigar, and about 9 c'clock take a nap until 1. Then get up and work."

That one can do the best work late at night, when

the day's ordinary occupations are over, was the

opinion expressed by a prominent brain specialist.

After being engaged throughout the day a person, according to the doctor, is, so to speak, and usually can do better work than that done during "For some persons the custom of getting up at 1

their way to church, it is considered a bad omen; if the

carriage runs over the animal, it is looked upon as a

TRADITIONS OF PEASANTS

The peasants of Galicia tell a legend about a happy

land, called Rakhmane, beyond the seas, where the peo-ple lead pure and sinless lives, and refrain from eating

meat on all days of the year excepting Easter. On this day they believe the shell of a consecrated Easter egg floats across the seas from the happy land to their

heads of families to send a charger filled with eggs-sometimes as many as twenty dozen-to the church to

be blessed. After the ceremony the charger is taken

room. During Easter week guests are led into the chamber and each is given an egg.

In Guinea a negro often sends an egg to an enemy. The

egg signifies, "choose the kind of death which will be easiest for you; otherwise I shall choose for you." Of course, the receipt of the egg is usually followed by a

In early times slaves received their freedom on Easter, This custom survives in the letting loose of caged birds

in Russia. In England it was the custom for monks to give dramatic plays concerning the Resurrection in the churches. The scenery usually represented the tomb of Christ. On Easter Day there was dancing and great

On the Continent games of ball were played in the

A number of American physicians coincide

with Professor Hallopean's views, although, as they say, the advice would not hold good in all cases. It

is, after all, a question of temperament. However,

personal encounter of the two focs.

their advice is-try it.

The egg figures in the superstitions of many countries where Christianity is not the prevailing religion. By delivering four eggs to the first stranger she meets, a widow in Tripoli believes she can transfer her troubles.

Among the Italians it has been a custom for the

sinister sign for the entire world.

shores.

o'clock might work admirably. With others it would be a failure. Generally speaking, however, I am of the opinion that a man, after his day's work, can still do better at night.

"Take a physician who has studied and worried himself over patients all day, over some distressing case; his nerves are so wrought up at night and wound to such a pitch that to write or study is an absolute relief. At the same time his condition usually tends brighten his mind, and he thinks much more

"A student, I believe, could probably get better results from study at night after the noises have ceased. I know men who cannot work during the day. There are others again who find it impossible to do any amount of work requiring serious thought late at

To ascertain whether one can do the best work at an uncanny hour of the marning, all physicians whose opinions were sought said: "Try it." As doctors find, no two cases are exactly alike.

have become quiet,
"The min up early with his candle has all the world
to himself; he can concentrate his mind, or let his
imagination soar. He can devote himself entirely to the work in hand, "As soon as the sun comes up the thousands

As soon as the sun comes up the thousands of people rush into the streets, trolley cars begin dronling, wheels rumble, there are hideous shricks and noises.

"The man who was a monarch at night is now a mere grain of sand. His mind becomes trammeled, mentally and physically he goes on with the drowd-

The Exyptian word uniform the type of the openr of the new year in nature—spring—and, of course,
is readily incorporated into the celebration of the
surrection of Christ.

The rabbit as a feature at Easter was probably im-